

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 05881 070723Z

12

ACTION EA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5770

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 5881

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, KS, JA

SUBJECT: ROK-JAPAN IMPASSE: PUBLIC ACTIVITIES AND ATTITUDES

REF: SEOUL 5875

1. ALMOST DEFUNCT ASIAN PEOPLES ANTI-COMMUNIST LEAGUE (APACL) HAS IN PAST WEEK EMERGED AS GOVERNMENT'S MAIN VEHICLE IN PROMOTING ANTI-JAPANESE SENTIMENTS. MUCH OF PROTEST ACTIVITY THIS WEEK APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED IF NOT ORGANIZED BY LEAGUE, NOMINALLY AT LEAST.

2. EMBASSY HAS BEEN TOLD THAT APACL HAS INVITED BOTH INDIVIDUAL CHURCH GROUPS AS WELL AS CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS NCCC-K AND CATHOLIC YOUNG CHRISTIAN WORKERS TO JOIN IN ANTI-JAPANESE DEMONSTRATIONS. OTHER CHURCH GROUPS HAVE BEEN REPORTEDLY INUNDATED WITH PUBLICITY MATERIAL ON SUBJECT.

3. ON SEPTEMBER 6, EXECUTIVE BOARD OF KOREAN NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES MET TO DISCUSS ANTI-JAPANESE ISSUE. BOARD REJECTED FORMAL PARTICIPATION BUT IS REPORTEDLY WILLING TO ISSUE STATEMENT ASKING
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 05881 070723Z

JAPAN TO BE MORE SENSITIVE TO KOREAN SECURITY

SITUATION.

4. ORGANIZED ANTI-JAPANESE ACTIVITY IS APPEARING THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. AT REQUEST OF OFFICE OF LABOR AFFAIRS (OLA,), KEY TRADE UNION LEADERS ACCOMPANIED BY OLA OFFICIALS ARE TOURING COUNTRY WARNING WORKERS TO REMAIN VIGILANT AGAINST JAPANESE ECONOMIC SABOTAGE. AT MASAN FREE ZONE, JAPANESE MANAGERS AND STAFF ARE REPORTEDLY RESTRICTED TO FREE ZONE AND HAVE BEEN WARNED POLICE CANNOT GUARANTEE THEIR PROTECTION IF THEY LEAVE. NEWSPAPERS ON SEPTEMBER 6 CARRIED STORY THAT TWO JAPANESE EMPLOYEES AT MASAN WERE BEING DEPORTED FOR TAKING TWO KOREAN GIRLS ON WEEKEND TRIP, AND "ABUSING" THEM. BUT DEPORTATION ITSELF PROBABLY IN RESPONSE TO ANTI-JAPANESE STRIKE BY KOREAN WORKERS THERE. OLA OFFICIAL TOLD EMBASSY THAT GOVERNMENT HAD WARNED JAPANESE MANAGERS AT MASAN AND KUMI THAT ROKG WOULD NOT TOLERATE ANY REDUCTION OF EMPLOYMENT BECAUSE OF BUSINESS DIFFICULTIES.

5. NDP OPPOSITION PARTY SPOKESMAN JOINED IN CONCERNS ABOUT KIMURA STATEMENT EXPRESSED BY OTHER PARTY LEADERS. NDP HAS PREVIOUSLY REMAINED QUIET ON ISSUE. HE NOTED "OUR GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE SHOULD UNITE STRONGLY TO COPE WITH ATTITUDE OF JAPAN." HOWEVER NDP DEPUTY FLOOR LEADER OHM YONG-TAL SAID PARTY REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS WITH JAPAN AND THE GOVERNMENT'S HIGHLY EMOTIONAL APPROACH TO PROBLEM. SAID PARTY WILL PROBABLY DECIDE ON POLICY AT SEPTEMBER 9 CAUCUS BUT IN ANY EVENT PRESENT NDP CONSENSUS IS NOT TO JOIN HANDS WITH GOVERNMENT PARTIES IN WORSENING PUBLIC ATMOSPHERE. OHM SAID NDP MORE WORRIED ABOUT WHAT ROKG WILL DO THAN IN JOINING CAMPAIGN TO PLAY ON ANTI-JAPANESE SENTIMENTS. HOWEVER OHM SAID SOME PARTY REACTION TO KIMURA'S INEPT PUBLIC STATEMENTS INEVITABLE. ERICSON

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